DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 098 213 SP 008 573

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TITLE Teacher Training in a Rural Georgia Community.
INSTITUTION Georgia Southern Coll., Statesboro.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 29p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Community Involvement; Diagnostic Teaching; *Field Experience Programs; Individualized Instruction; Masters Degrees; *Program Development; Resource Centers; *Rural School Systems; *School Community Cooperation; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Distinguished Achievement Awards Entry

ABSTRACT

This paper describes Project Alma, a cooperative effort between Georgia Southern College and Bacon County Schools that resulted in a field-based graduate teacher training program with a mandate to bring about new programs, approaches, and system renewal through teacher education. Project objectives are to: (a) design a field-based master's degree program based on the needs of local students and teachers, (b) integrate theory and sound practice into the milieu of Bacon County Schools, (c) facilitate the transitional benefits of such training into operational programs and approaches, and (d) explore alternatives for teacher education in rural areas. The Training Resource Center (TRC) in Bacon County worked to achieve these goals and was given the responsibility for implementation of clinical professorships, development of alternative training strands, facilitation of new programs, and identification of community resources. Results of the project include: (a) a diagnostic-prescriptive teaching style for local educators resulting from the clinical professorship; (b) training strands developed to improve the total learning environment of the schools; (c) community involvement through the School-Community Council; and (d) implementation of an Early Childhood Development Center, individualized instruction at the elementary level, and minicourses and a quarter system at the secondary level. Budget and evaluation information regarding the project are appended. (PD)

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ENTRY

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1975
DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM

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THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

TEACHER TRAINING IN A RURAL GEORGIA COMMUNITY

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Statesboro, Georgia

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SP 008 533

SUMMARY STATEMENT

TEACHER TRAINING IN A RURAL GEORGIA COMMUNITY

Georgia Southern College
Statesboro, Georgia

Recognizing the need for graduate teacher education in rural school systems, Georgia Southern College and the Bacon County Schools which are located approximately one hundred miles from the college campus, developed a teacher training model which is unique in both concept and design. Graduate education courses have been structured in a field situation to bring about teacher growth and systemwide change accruing in new programs and approaches. Broadly, the objectives of the program are to:

1. Design a field-based Master's degree program based on the unique needs of local students and teachers;
2. Integrate theory and sound practice into the milieu of Bacon County Schools;
3. Facilitate the transitional benefits of such training into operational programs and approaches and,
4. Explore alternatives for teacher education in rural areas.

These objectives have been pursued through the facilities and personnel of the Training Resource Center (TRC). Based in Bacon County, the TRC was given the responsibility for implementation of clinical professorships, development of alternative training strands, facilitation of new programs and the identification of community resources. To date, five clinical professors have lived and worked in Bacon County. Involved

in the public school classroom as well as the graduate classroom, the clinical professorship has resulted in a diagnostic-prescriptive teaching style for local educators.

Training strands have been developed for cafeteria personnel, school bus drivers, administrative personnel, substitute teachers, and volunteers in an effort to improve the total learning environment of the schools. Community involvement is coordinated through the School-Community Council, a group of twenty-one parents, business people, and educators with substantial investments in the outcomes of public education. Graduate and undergraduate course offerings have facilitated the implementation of an Early Childhood Development Center, individualization of instruction at the elementary level, mini-courses and a quarter system at the secondary level, and a K-12 "World of Work" program for all students.

The most dynamic of the changes made is that the public school-community has become an equal partner in graduate teacher education. When a college and community work together everybody gains.

TEACHER TRAINING IN A RURAL GEORGIA COMMUNITY

Georgia Southern College
Statesboro, Georgia

Alma is a small, rural community located in the Coastal Plains Region of Georgia. It is typical of many rural areas in the southeast, both in size and economic base. It has had a long history of declining agricultural activity, economic stagnation, lack of job opportunities and outmigration--particularly of its youngest and most promising residents. This outmigration, however, was far from voluntary. A survey of former residents revea ed close ties to family members who remained behind, and a widespread desire to return. The ills of the region were evident in the school system and children of the county. Records indicate that Alma students were scoring between two and three grade levels below national norms, that most classes in the public schools contained children at five different grade levels, and that forty percent of all high school age students left school before graduation. The challenge, in human terms, to the school system was to create an environment conducive to effective education and a rewarding life. This challenge, however, was hampered by the remoteness of available facilities and personnel. An area of low social and geographical mobility, Alma is nearly one hundred miles from the nearest senior college or metropolitan center. Equally discouraging was the fact that less than six percent of Alma teachers held advanced training and saw little opportunity to avail themselves of programs that were available.

Such was the picture when the School of Education at Georgia Southern College and the Bacon County School System began planning an aggressive

field-based teacher training program. The school board applied for and received an Urban Rural School Development grant for teacher training. Cooperative planning between the community and college resulted in a field-based graduate teacher training program with a mandate to bring about new programs, approaches, and system renewal through teacher education. The philosophy behind the program is that the teacher is the crucial factor in any equation calling for educational improvement, that teacher training should be based on the needs and desires of public school students and should be school-based even though of the college. The primary and potentially explosive element of the program is that the local community has become a dynamic force in teacher education. Broadly, the objectives of the program are to:

1. Design a field-based Master's degree program based on the unique needs of local students and teachers;
2. Integrate theory and sound practice into the milieu of Alma classrooms;
3. Facilitate the transitional benefits of such training into operational programs and approaches and,
4. Explore alternatives for teacher education in rural areas.

This union of college and community, or the "Alma Project" as it later became known rests on four approaches to teacher training in the field: Implementation of clinical professorships, development of alternative training strands, facilitation of new programs, and identification of community resources.

Clinical Professorship

It was clear from the beginning that if training was to be conducted with relevance for the Alma classroom it must be done in the Alma community. The vehicle for this training became the clinical professor. Living in the local community, the clinical professor has a wide range of training responsibilities. He teaches graduate and undergraduate courses, services a regularly scheduled calendar of inservice activities, and works in the public school classroom. To date, five doctoral level professors have been at work in the system: one in Administration and Supervision, one in Secondary Curriculum and Social Science Education, one in Elementary Curriculum, one in Media, and one in Home Economics. In addition, three subject matter specialists in the areas of language arts, math-science, and art work in the schools.

To maintain the thrust of relevant instruction for Bacon County teachers, new class attendance patterns were introduced. Instead of attending a traditional five hour graduate class it was agreed that the teacher would attend for only one and a half hour of formal classroom activity per week. The other three and a half hours of contact time required for credit would be accomplished by the clinical professor working directly with teachers in their classrooms. Local classroom contact also required that traditional course content be altered in such a way as to assure a laboratory situation where new strategies could be introduced in the graduate classroom and implemented or revised immediately in the public school classroom.

To date, over fifty graduate courses have been taught in Alma, with fifteen teachers receiving Master's Degrees plus three Educational Specialist degrees in a completely field-based program. As new teachers are assimilated into the system their advance training begins immediately.

Implementation of New Programs Through Training

In order to make the professional staff of the Bacon County Schools more independent of the college campus and assure an available data bank for teachers interested in implementing new programs, a Training Resource Center (TRC) was introduced. Housed in the Human Resources Building, the TRC provides facilities and equipment for media reproduction, conference rooms for classes and seminars, a professional library, and the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) collection of over 60,000 journal articles, research reports, and curriculum guides stored on microfiche. In addition, the library service of the Georgia Department of Public Instruction makes available several hundred books on a loan basis to the system.

Training provided teachers through the facilities of the TRC has facilitated the planning, implementation, and success of several new programs in the system. Among these are the Early Childhood Development Program for ages three through five, individualization of instruction at the elementary school level, implementation of a quarter system and mini-courses at the high school level, and a K-12 "World of Work" program, ranging from a broad orientation to work roles in the elementary grades to more direct skill training at the junior and senior high school levels.

Development of Alternative Training Strands

The development of alternative training strands basically encompassed two areas: inservice activities for teachers not interested in graduate study and support services training for non-teaching members of the system. To accomodate and encourage inservice trairing for teachers, an inservice point system was initiated. Teachers must accumulate at least twenty-five

Inservice Points during the course of a year. Workshops, seminars, discussion groups, and graduate classes are the main vehicles for the accumulation of points. Usually held in the late afternoons, workshops and discussion groups have featured the following topics: humanistic teaching, non-verbal communications, empathy training, contingency management, introduction to psychological theories, instructional strategies, etc. Inservice meetings have been used extensively as operational planning sessions for teachers initiating new programs.

Not content to deal exclusively with academic areas alone, the project has worked with all components of the educational system. DINE (Developments in Nutritional Education) has conducted extensive seminars and workshops for cafeteria personnel. TASK (Transportation And Safe Kids) has looked closely at the transportation component of the system, upgrading skills and making bus drivers aware of the part played by transportation in the total learning environment of the schools. Management Planning Assistance has been given school principals and central office administration, resulting in improved supervisory involvement, organizational realignment, time and resource allocation, and support services utilization. In addition, custodial training was provided to ensure the acquisition of improved methods and techniques and to decrease the time consumed in problem solving activities in this area.

Identification of Community Resources

A School-Community Council composed of twenty-one community members from various segments of Alma and Bacon County worked with Georgia Southern College from the beginning. The Council was important in identifying and

enlisting the aid of city and county residents in bringing about improved teacher education. The VIP (Volunteers Inspire Progress) program brought resource people into the classroom and helped assure a pool of community workers with the persuasive clout to get the job done. Substitute teachers and volunteers received training through the TRC to more effectively carry out their responsibilities. Grants are offered local residents to attend undergraduate courses in the area. For every hour spent in a college classroom, the resident must spend an hour as a volunteer in a public school classroom. There are no restrictions on what undergraduate classes may be taken and the community member is free to opt out of the agreement when all responsibilities have been met. Evening vocational classes have been opened to community members so that the schools become multi-purpose institutions giving to the community and receiving from it as the need dictates.

The implications of the Alma Project are far-reaching. Reorientation in graduate teacher education in terms of local school needs and authority is the most substantive of the changes made. The growing importance of quanitative and qualitative extensions of formal education coupled with the needs of the rural school system dictates the urgent need to adopt a more community oriented and coordinated approach to advanced study. Implicit in the concept is a high degree of local on-site involvement, leadership and autonomy. The importance of this concept will grow as rural schools attempt to realign priorities, a process essential in an age of shifting resources and population.

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

. BUDGET

. EVALUATION

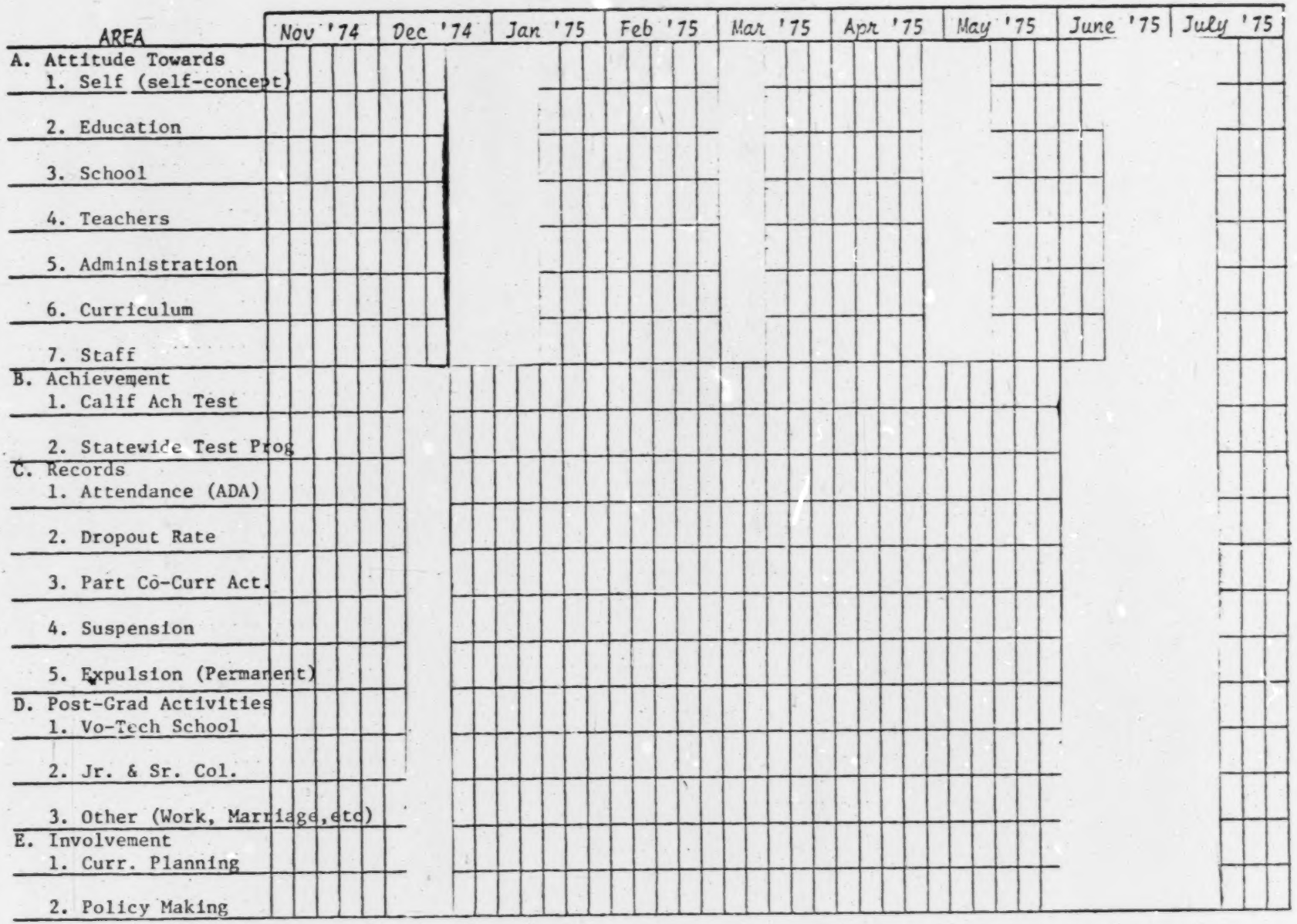
. BROCHURE

BUDGET

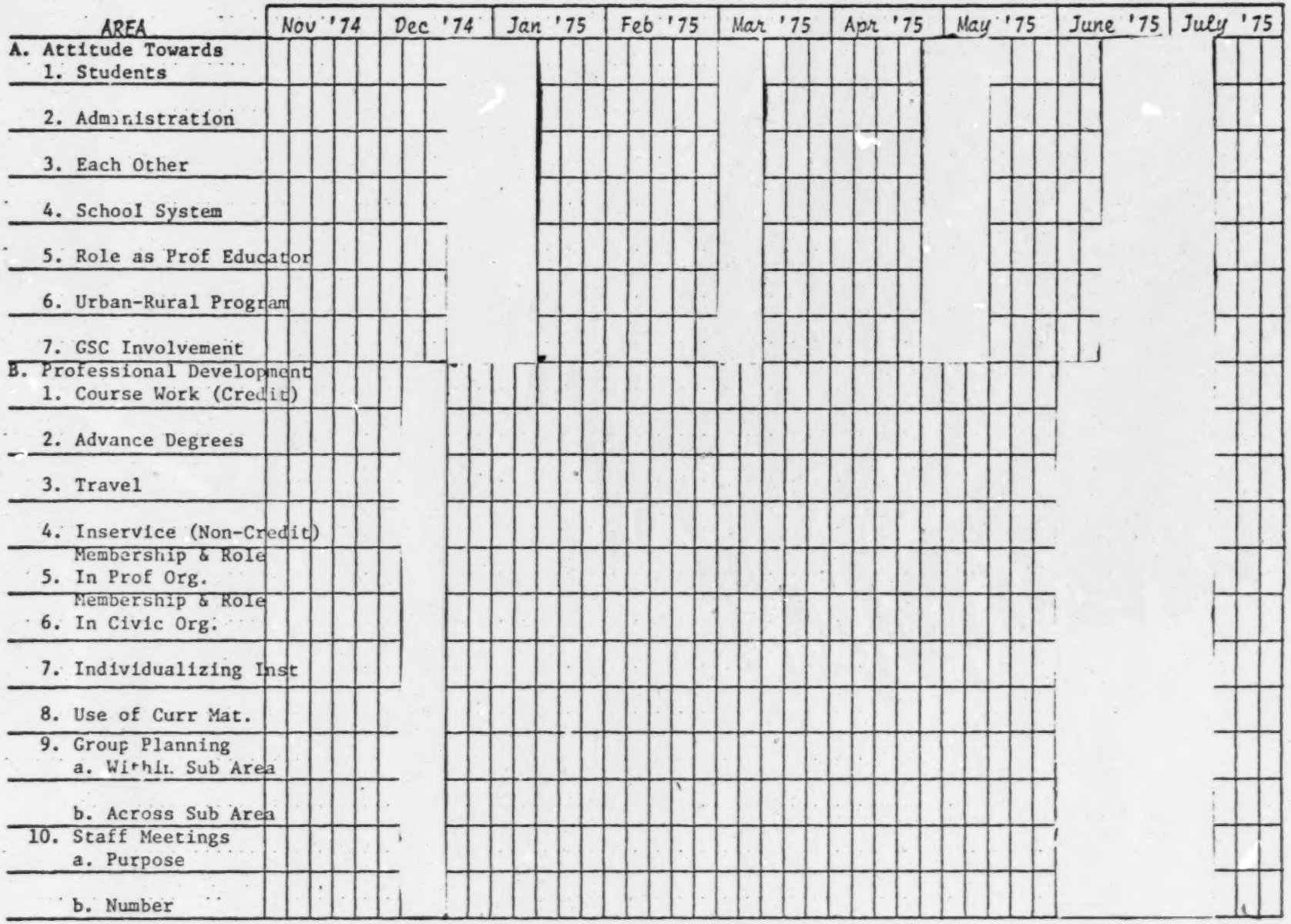
ALMA PROJECT
1974-1975

I.	PERSONNEL	
	1. Project Director	
	a. Full time July, August, and half time September-June	12,375.00
	2. Clinical Professors - 12 months	
	a. Curriculum	16,100.00
	b. Social Studies	15,900.00
	3. Fringe Benefits @ 17%	7,544.00
II.	PROCESSING FEES	
	150 Alma students @ $20.00	3,000.00
III.	TRAVEL	
	Professional staff to travel between GSC and Alma 60 trips @ $25.00 (transportation and/or perdiem)	1,500.00
IV.	DIRECT COSTS	56,419.00
V.	INDIRECT COSTS AT 1%	564.00
	PROJECT TOTAL	56,983.00

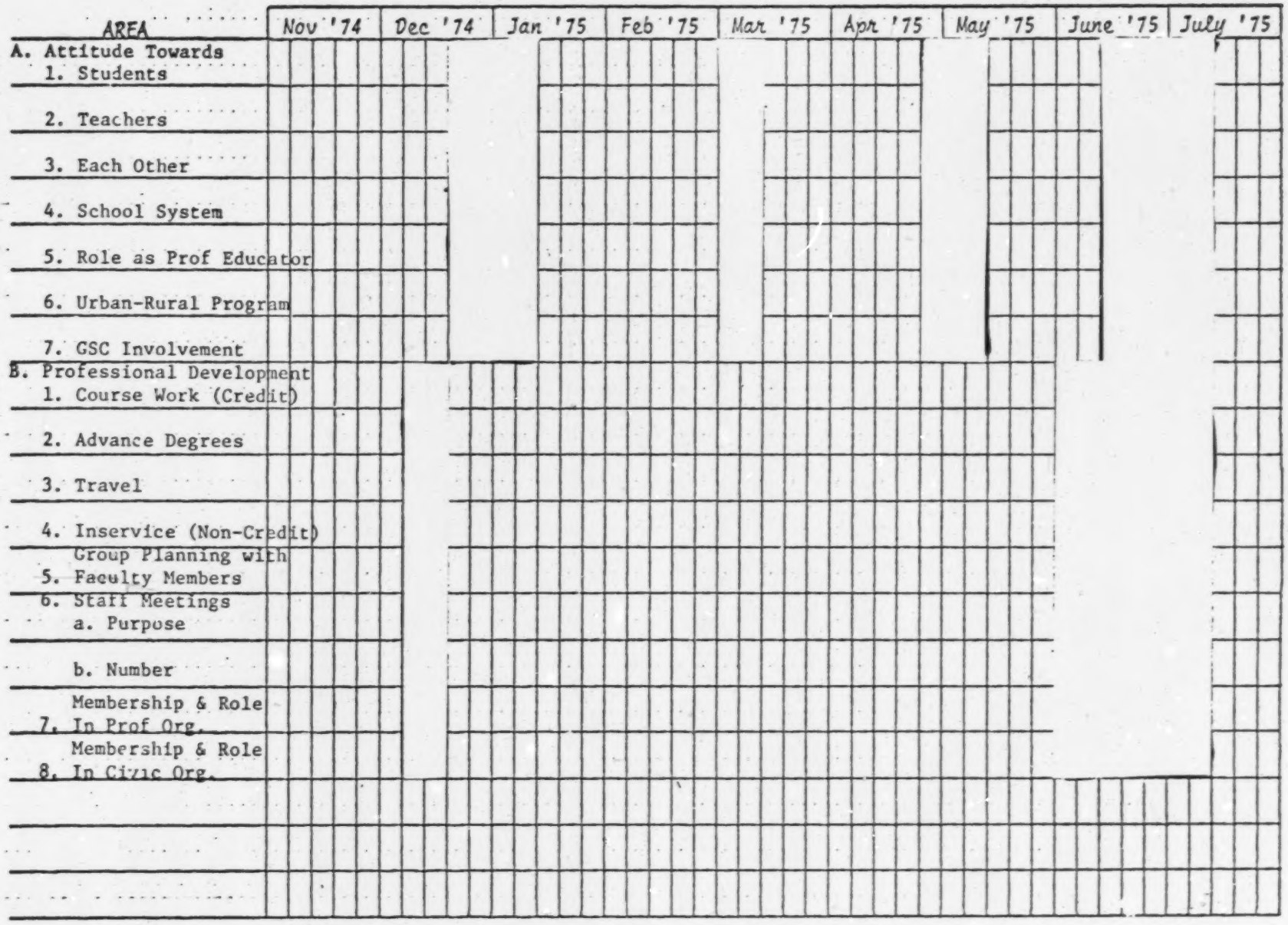
I SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Students



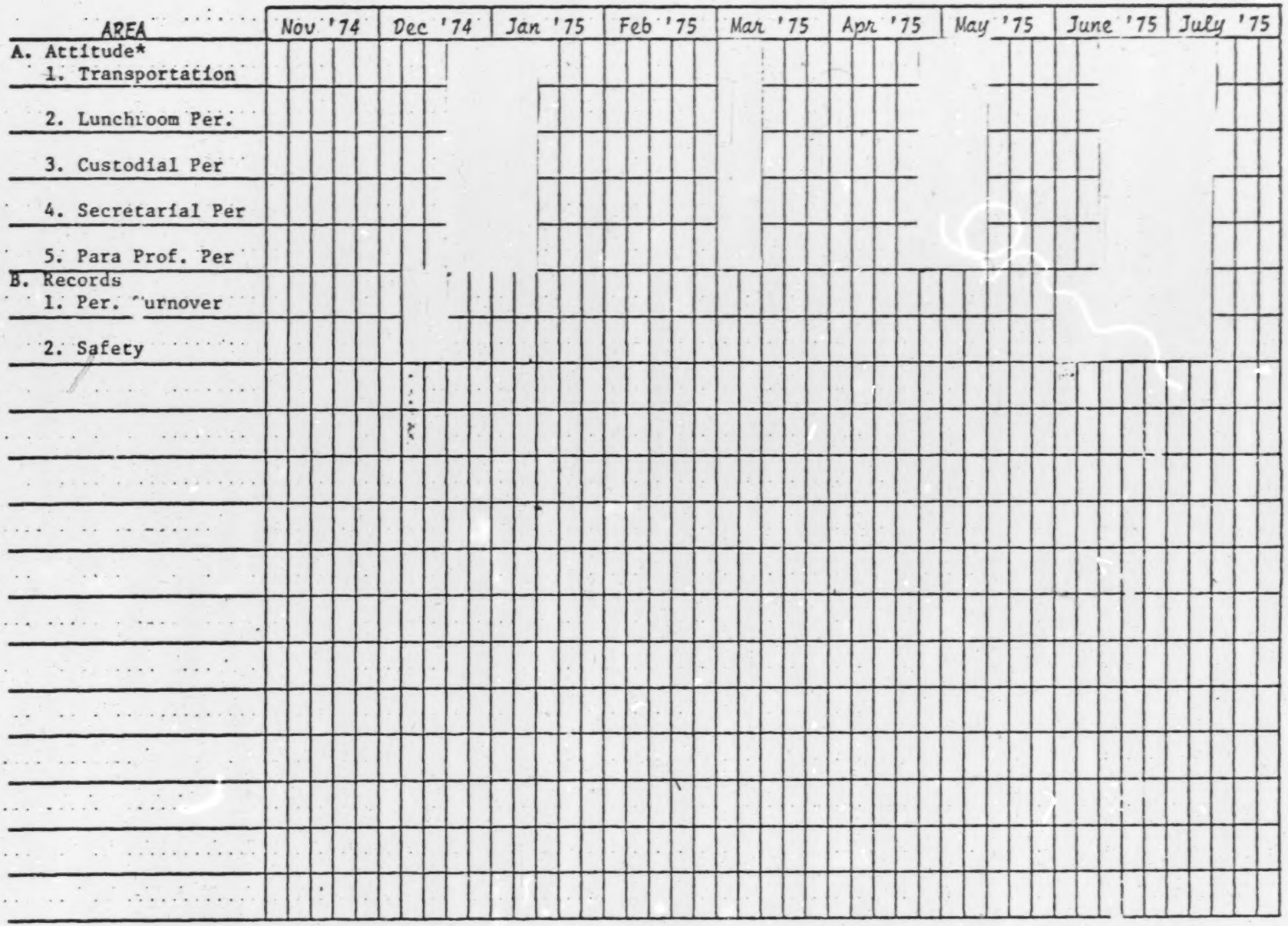
II SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Faculty (Non-Administrators)



III SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Administration



IV SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Staff (Non-Educational Personnel)



*Towards Urban-Rural Program

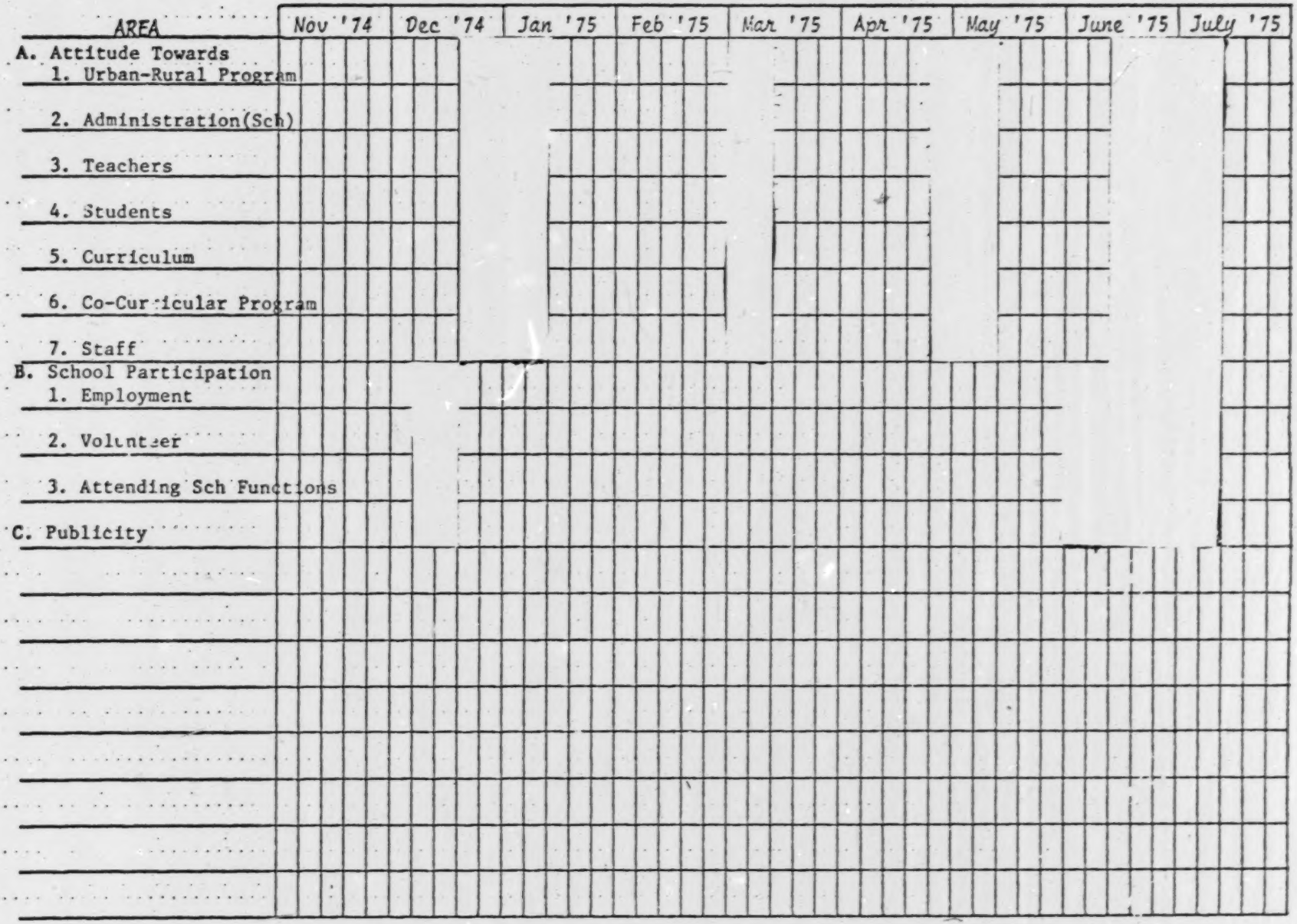
V. SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Curriculum

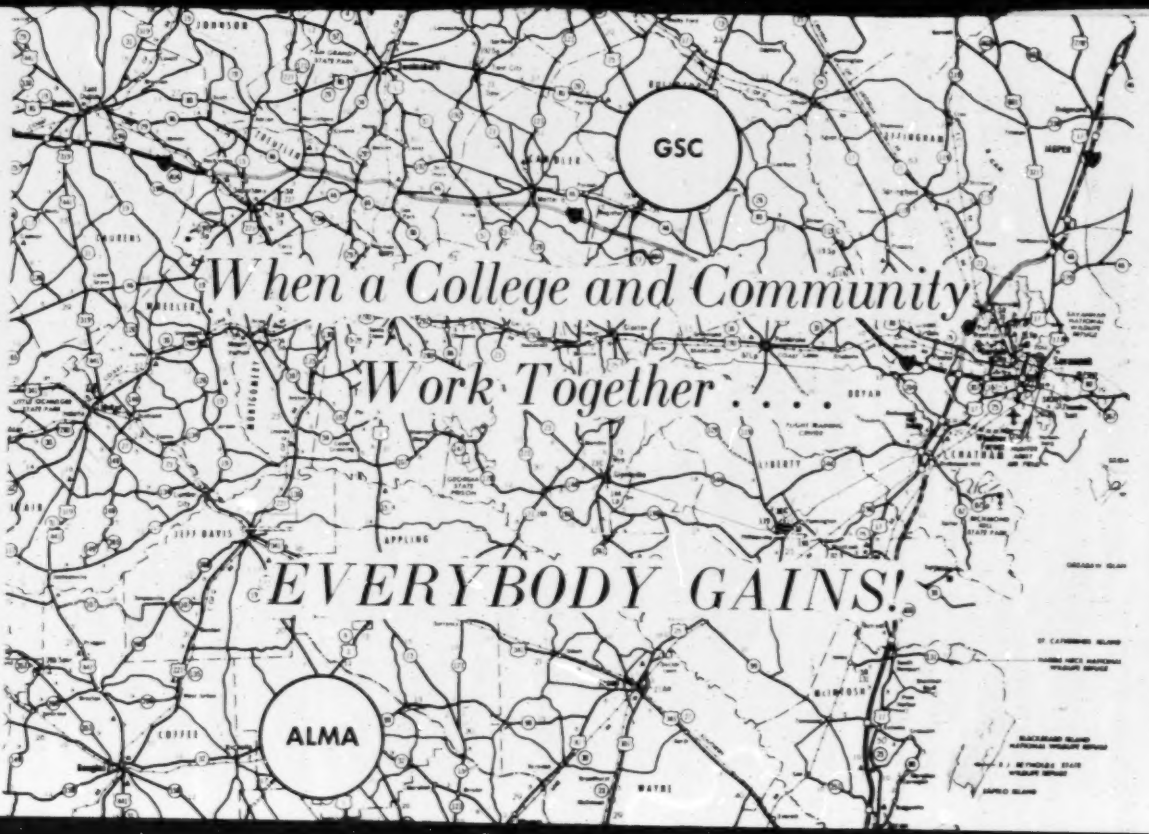
AREA	Nov '74	Dec '74	Jan '75	Feb '75	Mar '75	Apr '75	May '75	June '75	July '75
1. Courses Added									
2. Courses Dropped									
3. Courses Revised									
4. PLAN Impact									
a. Implementation									
b. Use of									
c. Dropping PLAN									
d. Revision Process									
5. Equipment & Supplies									
a. Demand for Prof Mat.									
b. New Mat. Purchased									
c. Demand for Equip.									
d. New Equip. Purchased									
6. Meet Student Needs & Interests									

VI SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Facilities

AREA	Nov '74	Dec '74	Jan '75	Feb '75	Mar '75	Apr '75	May '75	June '75	July '75
A. New Const. (1970 on)									
1. Type									
2. Purpose									
3. Effectiveness									
B. Renovation (Contractural)									
1. Type									
2. Purpose									
3. Effectiveness									
C. Maintenance									
1. Type									
2. Purpose									
3. Effectiveness									
4. Quality									
D. Changes (Non-Contractural)									
1. Type									
2. Purpose									
3. Effectiveness									
4. Performed By									

VII SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION FOR Community





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PARTICIPANTS

GEORGIA SOUTHERN COLLEGE

DR. POPE DUNCAN, President

DR. NICHOLAS QUICK, Vice-President

DR. JACK AVERITT, Dean of Graduate School

DR. STARR MILLER, Dean of School of Education

DR. HILTON BONNIWELL, Director of Continuing Education and Public Services

DR. W. L. HITCHCOCK, Dept. Head, Education Psy., and Guidance

DR. WALTER B. MATHEWS, Dept. Head, Elementary Education

DR. JOHN HULSEY, Dept. Head, Secondary Education

DR. HOWARD MOSELEY, Dept. Head, School Services

ALMA

DR. RONALD HUBRIGHT, Director

DR. JUDITH BAZEMORE, Teacher Trainer

DR. WILLIAM BRUCE, Teacher Trainer

DR. RUTH HARRIS, Teacher Trainer

MR. JAMES DEEN, Manager, URSDP

MRS. GLENDA BOATRIGHT, Secretary

MR. LEON SAPP, Superintendent, Board of Education, Bacon County

MR. TOM LEWIS, Federal Coordinator

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COUNCIL, Chairman, R. T. Johnson

(20 Members)

Total School System Personnel

For some time, educators have recognized a need to revitalize higher education. Few institutions, however, have been willing to assume a leadership roll in exploring new concepts and devising programs appropriate to the needs of a changing society. The School of Education at Georgia Southern College under the leadership of Dean of Education Starr Miller is helping to develop a model for in-service teacher education in Alma, Georgia which is unique in both concept and design. The college is functioning as coordinator and innovator in revolutionizing teacher renewal under the auspices of a five-year Urban Rural School Development Program grant. Perhaps the most unique feature of the program is that it is OF the college, but not necessarily AT the college.

Alma - Bacon County, Georgia is a small rural community located in the Coastal Plains Region of the state. The total school population consists of 2,263 students and 220 employees The global objective of the program is to enhance in a positive and developmental manner student growth via improved performance by teachers and related personnel.

THE SPECIFIC PROGRAM STRANDS ARE THESE:

Modification of Behavior
Contingency and Logistics Management
Development of Curriculum
Saturation of Content Knowledge
Professional Oriented Participation
System-Wide Involvement in Performance
Maintenance Operations Prerequisites
Transportation and Safe Kids
Developments in Nutritional Education
Multiple opportunities to help enrich resources
Planning, Organizing, Implementing, Supervising, and Evaluation (Administrator's Strand)

PROGRAMS

To fulfill the objectives of each of these strands, the following innovative activities have been set in motion:

1. Fourteen full credit graduate and undergraduate courses are being taught in Alma. Four full time professors work on-site.
2. Teachers taking these courses do so on a release time basis.
3. These courses are integrated with actual classroom teaching performance.
4. There is a movement toward establishing a residence center in Alma.
5. Registration procedures have been revised and simplified.
6. Content of courses has been designed to meet local needs.
7. Professors are placed in public school classrooms.
8. These activities contribute toward the development of a model for teacher education in other colleges.
9. All programs operate under structured evaluation design.
10. 70% of faculty in Bacon County is involved in graduate programs.
11. Most importantly, personnel and student attitudes are increasingly positive toward both professional performance and the process of education itself.

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PROGRESS